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THE LITERARY WEEK

THE old question of an Academy of Literature has been raised again; this time *à propos de bottles* by Mr. Arthur Christopher Benson. Like everything that Mr. Benson writes, his paper in the *National Review* is just, suggestive, and finely expressed. We have no space here to examine it at length, but it raises one or two points of interest. "What one desires," writes Mr. Benson, "is that there should be something central and authoritative," and he goes on to say that "the best newspapers tend to reflect private mannerisms and prejudices." The question arises, at once: How is his central and authoritative body to avoid private mannerisms and prejudices among its own members? Its judgment would be composed of the opinions of its members, and in the association of men there is nothing to deprive them of their private mannerisms and prejudices. The authoritative gazette issued by Mr. Benson's suggested Academy, would probably be composed of articles, each written by a single member of the body, and unless each writer gave expression to his private mannerisms and prejudices (mere affectations excepted) he would not be giving a genuine expression of his opinion, and so would be sacrificing every claim to be considered a faithful critic. We believe that there have been journals in which the experiment was tried of letting a number of contributors all read the proofs of each article. Where they succeeded in removing the personal stamp of the original writer, they reduced the article to a feeble generality; where they left it alone it remained (except probably for the toning down of mere literary eccentricities), as personal as it was when it left the author's pen.

We question, therefore, whether corporate judgment is possible; whether, that is, the various individualities that compose the body corporate could adjust themselves into agreement; and, secondly, whether, if this were done, the result would be for good. In the case of artistic societies, which do something of the kind, the result, as every one knows, has not been entirely in the direction of purity of judgment; and even if the members of Mr. Benson's suggested Academy were to hold themselves as wholly aloof as he desires from the commercial spirit and even from the love of fame, we question whether the corporate judgment might not result in the sinking of individualities, and a consequent colourless correctness in matters of grammar and the use of words alone. In these matters, of course, such a body would, like the French Academy, be of the greatest service to letters. After all it is an old truism that individuality is what is of value in literature. There would, we suspect, be a good many books condemned by such an Academy, for bad grammar, bad style, bad taste, or bad science, which, nevertheless, might to some minds—and those not the least finely tempered—bring something valuable. The tendency, we suspect, would be towards the checking of independent effort, the discouragement of literary adventure, the clipping of the wings of birds, who might soar with new and beautiful song.

Mr. Benson pays a tribute to the literary criticism in the newspapers of the present day, which he qualifies by a

partial reservation. It is perfectly true, of course, that a great deal of reviewing is done by hack writers in a hurry; but all the literary papers which take literary criticism seriously are obliged, for their own sake, to find in every case the right man to review each book, and allow him to review it after his own style. The right man is occasionally difficult to find; and it is too often the case that the man who knows is not the man who can express himself. A literary paper has two duties. It must play the part which Mr. Benson would like to see played by an Academy; but also it must pay due attention to the fact that criticism is in itself an art and that right opinion is not sufficient: there must also be right expression. We suspect that the "authoritative gazette," which Mr. Benson desiderates, would lack that latter quality: and the result would be that the authoritative journal would be setting up a standard of criticism which was, in one most important aspect at least, below that of the newspaper criticism which we now enjoy.

On the nineteenth of this month a bronze statue of Sir Thomas Browne is to be unveiled at Norwich by Lord Avebury. We think it our duty to chronicle the fact, but are beginning to be suspicious of this year, 1905. It contains such an extraordinary number of anniversaries and celebrations, that the topic threatens to become wearisome, and will in future be neglected in these columns.

Norwich does well to be proud of Sir Thomas Browne, not only on account of his writings but because he practised medicine there for over forty years, with a great reputation for skill and erudition. He attended Bishop Hall in his last sickness, and, no doubt, many other persons in illnesses which were not final. In Norwich, too, he married—his wife was a Norfolk lady—and begat sons and daughters. In spite of the common observation about the sons of men of genius, Browne's sons managed to be fairly clever. The elder, Dr. Edward Browne, became President of the Royal College of Physicians, and had Charles II. for a patient. In his youth he travelled extensively, and made a book out of his experiences, though, if Dr. Johnson is to be believed, "a great part of it is taken up with unimportant accounts of his passage from one place where he saw little to another place where he saw no more."

But Sir Thomas' second son is a far more interesting character. Like his father, "Honest Tom," as he is always addressed in the family correspondence, had the literary turn. If any one desires to be amused and exhilarated, let him read "Honest Tom's" journal of a tour in Derbyshire, on horseback, which is to be found in Wilkins' edition of his father's works. "Honest Tom" was what is termed in Ireland "a broth of a boy," and fun and high spirits winged his quill. But he was not to be a professed penman. He was all for action, became an officer in the Navy, fought against the Dutch and was commended by Lord Sandwich, and, had not an early and unexplained death removed him, might have lived to win as great renown in the sphere of naval warfare as did his father in that of authorship.

How far may an author go in puffing himself and his works? The self-respecting British author can have but one answer to such a question, and that is, "no way at all." The French man of letters, showing surely in this the wonderful "horse sense" of his nation, goes about the matter in a perfectly simple and unashamed way. He sends a copy of his book, inscribed with a more or less flowery dedication, not only to the leading critics, but to all those men and women of note with whom he may happen to be acquainted, or, what is more curious, whom he thinks are likely to appreciate the volume in question. But before doing this he often even pays a personal call on each of the great critics. Such an interview is not as embarrassing as might be thought; it is limited as to time,

consists chiefly of the interchange of formal compliments, and it may be doubted whether these civilities have the slightest effect on the critic's final judgment. But of course personality does count for something. In the *De Goncourts' Journal* there is a description, at once absurd and pathetic, of a visit thus paid by the two brothers to Sainte-Beuve. By the way, a good signed review always brings the French writer of it a cordial letter of thanks, and almost invariably a grateful call, from the happy author.

Another point, and one of more legitimate interest to the novelist, concerns the mysterious "movement" which sometimes takes place long after a book has apparently fallen more or less flat on its first appearance. Every publisher, and many story-writers, can recall instances within their own knowledge of such pleasant surprises. In one such case—that of an early book of Edna Lyall—the great circulating libraries had actually sold off all their second-hand copies, when suddenly the book began "to move," and to the grief of their managers and the joy of the publisher, the libraries had to begin buying anew. It is, we believe, a fact that no one has ever discovered to what this suddenly increased sale may be attributed. Advertisement certainly does much, but some say that dinner-table talk does more. In old days a postcard from Mr. Gladstone was a valuable asset, and started at least one successful novelist on the road to fame and fortune; while the effects of a review article by the same mighty hand was shown in the case of "John Inglesant" and "Robert Elsmere." There is no one nowadays who wields such a power, but is that wholly to be regretted?

Longman's is not the only old-established magazine that finds competition in these days too keen. It is stated that another old favourite of our youth, the *Leisure Hour*, is to cease publication in its present form with the current issue, and is to reappear as the *Leisure Hour Monthly Library*, a title which summons up visions of novelettes. It was in the *Leisure Hour* that Mr. Stanley Weyman's first really good work appeared; the late G. W. Stevens was a contributor, Mr. H. W. Massingham compiled some most interesting historical articles for it a few years ago, and Mr. Tighe Hopkins once contributed a very brilliant serial to the *Leisure Hour*. We hear that several other magazines, the price of which has hitherto been sixpence, are contemplating a reduction to fourpence. Will they become more and more ephemeral, more and more simply papers to pass the time, and not useful and trustworthy works of reference as many of the older magazines were?

On the retirement of Sir Richard Holmes next month from the post of librarian at Windsor Castle, King Edward will lose a very able servant who has devoted over half his life to the wonderful collection at Windsor. It is to the acumen of Sir Richard that the Royal Library owes its collection of Whistler etchings, and the popularity of the library and its keeper with visitors to the Castle has long been a subject of common knowledge. Besides his experience as a judge of prints, books and *objets d'art* Sir Richard was also one of our earliest Volunteer officers, and commenced his service as a bugler with the Highgate Rifles, now known as the 1st V.B. Middlesex Regiment. He was the first Volunteer officer, moreover, to receive a medal. In 1868, he accompanied the Abyssinian expedition, and has acted as a war correspondent.

On October 9 Mr. T. Fisher Unwin will announce the result of his First Novel Competition for a prize of £100, and the successful novel will be published on October 16 in his First Novel Library. It will be remembered that Mr. Unwin announced his intention of holding the competition a year ago, and that the entries closed at the end of March. Any writer who had never had a novel published was eligible.

Statistics have been published showing that Ecclefechan continues to attract pilgrims from all quarters of the globe. In the year ending on August 31, no fewer than one thousand seven hundred people visited "Entepfuhl," and the birthplace of Carlyle. We were once present in the cottage when an enthusiastic pilgrim asked in awe-struck tones: "And is this really the room in which Carlyle was born?" and received from the gude-wife the answer: "Aye, an' oor Maggie was born here, too." The visitors from abroad are mainly Americans, but all nations are represented, including the Hindus.

Ecclefechan, however, seems a neglected shrine when compared with the Castle of Chillon, where, as the latest statistics show, they number their visits not by hundreds, nor by thousands, but by tens of thousands. It is a proof of the power of genius to attract, even when setting history openly at defiance. The two brothers, whose death forms the subject of such touching lines, belong to fiction, since Bonivard was confined alone. Nor did he suffer for his attachment to the Protestant cause, but for his political opposition to the ascendancy of the Duke of Savoy at Geneva. Nor, finally, are the dungeons below the level of the Lake, though as Mr. Francis Gribble in his "Lake Geneva and its Literary Landmarks" quotes a statement of Bonivard himself to the effect that his prison was so situated, we may perhaps infer that things have altered since the sixteenth century. A history of the Castle is in preparation, though we should have thought that that written some years ago by M. Louis Vulliemin, and since more than once reprinted, was good enough for all practical purposes.

The recent events in the Caucasus furnished a fresh opportunity of exhibiting Jules Verne in the rôle of prophet. Almost everything that has happened is anticipated in the pages of "Michel Strogoff"; and the question of the probability of the incidents depicted in that novel was first raised when the author brought it to D'Ennery to be dramatised. "My friend," D'Ennery reported, "your story is very interesting, but I can do nothing with it for the theatre. Its improbabilities are such as the public would not accept. I draw your attention to one improbability in particular—the burning of the petroleum reservoirs. Do you see this river of fire, rolling its waves of flame for miles? I do not deny that it would have a fine spectacular effect. But it is too improbable. It is more than improbable. It is impossible." "Impossible, perhaps," Jules Verne replied. "But impossible? No. In the coming century we shall have to strike the word 'impossible' out of our dictionaries, as Napoleon advised, and we shall see such strange things that my romances will read like prophecies." So D'Ennery gave way. The piece was constructed on the author's lines, was enthusiastically received, and ran for a long time at the Châtelet.

The Elizabethan Literary Society opened its twenty-second session last Wednesday at Toynbee Hall with a paper by Mr. Arthur C. Hayward on "Life in Elizabethan England." The further lectures of the session will be as follows: November 1, "Venus and Adonis," by the President, Mr. Sidney Lee; December 6, "From a Woman's Point of View," by Miss M. E. Wotton; January 10, "Shakespeare's Theatre," by Professor A. C. Bradley; February 7, "A King's Diary," by Mr. Frederick Rogers; March 7, "Sir John Harington," by Mr. W. G. Hutchinson; April 4, "Elizabethan Psychology," by Professor Dowden; and May 2, "The Authorship of *Edward III.*," by Mr. John M. Robertson, all at 8 P.M. On the other Wednesdays of the session the society will meet to read the plays of Marlowe and Otway, and some of Montaigne's *Essays* in Florio's version. On October 28, November 18, and December 9, dramatic readings will be given at 7.30 P.M. in the Toynbee Lecture Hall by the Secretary of the Society, Mr. Otto Sallmann.

LITERATURE

SUBJECTS OF MODERN ROMANCE

A Servant of the Public. By ANTHONY HOPE. (Methuen, 6s.)

Starvecrow Farm. By STANLEY WEYMAN. (Hutchinson, 6s.)

The Life of Sir Aglovale de Galis. By CLEMENCE HOUSMAN. (Methuen, 6s.)

Ayesha: the Return of She. By H. RIDER HAGGARD. (Ward, Lock, 6s.)

The Reckoning. By ROBERT W. CHAMBERS. (Constable, 6s.)

WE have chosen these five novels for our text because of the apt way in which they illustrate the fact that the imaginative writers of to-day are ranging far and wide, both as regards time and space, in search of material. Mr. Anthony Hope—whose "Servant of the Public" we have placed first in the list—follows illustrious examples in so far as he seeks his ideas in the life of his own time. As precedent for this he might quote nearly all the greatest novel-writers. Cervantes wrote his burlesque of chivalry just when knighthood in the old sense was becoming obsolete, but when there was still enough knowledge and familiarity with the old system to commend his ideas to the understanding of his readers. His immediate successor Le Sage followed his example in this respect, although he translated the action from France—of which he was a native—to Spain, a country he probably considered more suitable to the kind of work he meditated. Our own Fielding, in the greatest of his works, painted the manners of the people among whom he had actually lived. Squire Western might have been his next-door neighbour, Thwackem and Square he had no doubt encountered often, and poor Partridge, with his *infandum regina*, belonged in every respect to Fielding's own period. So it was with Jane Austen, whose "Pride and Prejudice" was a reflection of the life she saw around her, and whose other novels were all more or less contemporary pictures. Sir Walter Scott, it is true, recognised to an unusual degree the glamour of the past: the immediate past so far as the first of his novels, "Waverley," was concerned, the remote past in the romance of "Ivanhoe" and its fellows. If we come down to writers who are, more strictly speaking, modern, we find that they seldom went far afield for their subjects. Dickens, both imaginatively and actually, lived in the London he knew so well. If Thackeray in his "Esmond" went back a little, it was to a period not far removed from his own, and one which he had most closely and lovingly studied; but in most of his other novels he dealt simply with the life of his own time. So in large measure did George Eliot. The Midland scenery and the Midland farmers and other country folk with whom she had come into contact in her youth formed the subject of her first—and what probably is the best—of her novels, "Adam Bede"; while, in the opinion of most qualified critics, when she went abroad to Italy for the material of "Romola," it was to meet with comparative failure.

These writers of fiction have abundantly shown that material for romance always exists in the life going on around them, and Mr. Anthony Hope followed a sound instinct in the selection of his staging and characters. The present time we have always looked upon as one of very exceptional interest: old class distinctions have been worn away, the clodhopper kibes at the courtier's heel, out of the mill of commerce those who are called self-made men have ground fortunes, the possession of which admits them to the most exclusive circles in the land; and society—taking the word in its broadest meaning—presents that jumble in which the keen observer may find those contrasts that are of the very essence of imaginative work. Here, in these very pages, we have it exemplified how the man who has come to the front by selling ribbons meets on equal terms with those whose lineage is of the purest in the country. We find an actress of no very well established character admitted into the same circles, and altogether there is

that commingling of classes which serves the novelist's aim so exactly. If Mr. Anthony Hope's instinct had been backed up by the power that goes to the making of a great imaginative writer, "A Servant of the Public" might have found a place among the literature that is immortal. But his self-made man is but faintly adumbrated. There is a want of boldness and concentration in the manner of his presentation and scarcely an attempt is made to make him either amusing or interesting. Mr. Anthony Hope undoubtedly saw in his mind's eye the illusive charm that his servant of the public might have possessed, but he would indeed be a flattering critic who pretended that the author had realised it; while the other characters are open to the same criticism. They are skillfully selected and well conceived, but it is as if the novelist had not the power to shape them as he would. Hence we cannot regard "A Servant of the Public" as other than a failure. It is sufficiently interesting to wile away an hour or two, but not so interesting as to fulfil the promise to which the early career of its author gave rise.

Mr. Stanley Weyman has gone just a step further afield than Mr. Anthony Hope. He does not seek his material in the life of his time, but in that of a generation which immediately preceded it—in the England that existed after the Continental wars. Naturally, in attempting to appraise the value of the novel, we ask whether Mr. Weyman has quite realised that England. It was an England grown weary of endless conflicts, and the rural part of it was extremely discontented: discontented, one might say, with an inarticulate discontent. It may be remarked that the rural swain has very seldom been contented with his lot. He appears to have been fairly happy in the fourteenth century, but a change in social affairs produced a swinging back of the pendulum, and we have that period followed by the insurrection of the peasants for many hundreds of years afterwards. Discontent had been seething in the rural districts, and after the war it took the sullen form of nocturnal rick-burning and other outrages. Mr. Weyman incidentally brings in conspiracies, but he has, we think, moulded them more upon the schemes of the Nihilists and Socialists than upon the proceedings of the Chartists, who were, by comparison, a mild and reasonable people. However, he does not rest the chief interest of his romance upon that pivot, but rather upon the fortunes of a young girl, to whom we are introduced at the beginning of the book, on her way to Gretna Green. Her adventures are strange, but they have also a touch of cruelty that somehow leaves a bad taste in the mouth of the reader, who can with equanimity see a man driven through many extraordinary adventures, but always is revolted when a beautiful and virtuous woman is brought within the verge of being shamed. Mr. Weyman has written a novel that is likely to be read with delight on a wet day in a country house or on a railway journey.

The next novel on our list is Mr. Clemence Housman's "Sir Aglovale de Galis." Mr. Housman has, as we think, attempted an impossible feat. In the first place, he had to invent a language in which to tell his story, and the result is a grotesque compromise between the colloquial English of to-day and the stately English of Malory, from whom he has adopted some locutions that are very grotesque in their new setting. Scarcely a page, for instance, passes without our being informed in it that some one or other "smote down his head"; it does not mean, as the reader might suppose, that he cut his head off, but that he hung his head, generally in shame. And of a truth we were not aware that the sturdy knights of the Round Table were so easily shamed. The language is, indeed, "Wardour of Wardour Street," and its singular mixture of old and new is typical of the extraordinary combination of modern and old sentiment in the novel itself. When the late Lord Laureate attempted in his "Idyls of the King" to modernise and moralise Malory, it is generally admitted that, except in that magnificent poem, "The Passing of Arthur," he incontestably failed. "The finer feelings of our nature," as exemplified in this twentieth

century, will not fit in with the rugged fighting heroes that Malory pictured. And no modern author dare reproduce the lust and rapine, murder, robbery and outrage that characterised the period of which Malory wrote, and much of which he indicates without reproof, as he very well might, seeing that it was part and parcel of the time uncivilised. The remorse and repentance and general sentimentalising in which Mr. Housman indulges, do not in any sense belong to this period. The conversion from wickedness, that often would cause a knight, who had borne himself valiantly in the field, to withdraw at the end of his career to a hermit's cell, where by fasting and penance, intercession and prayer, he tried to atone for his misdeeds, was a simpler and more natural affair altogether than the complex sentiments which Mr. Housman has tried to introduce into his "Sir Agloval de Galis," the hero of whom it is ever and anon told that "he smote down his head."

Mr. Rider Haggard, like Mr. Anthony Hope, seeks romance in his own period, but not in its actual affairs and actual people. In "Ayesha" he has brought back to life the redoubtable "She who must be obeyed," who, according to the legend of his older novel, had lived for some two thousand years, during which she had accumulated wisdom and knowledge. The tale itself might have been suggested by that of the "Wandering Jew," of whose story a melodramatic Frenchman, Eugène Sue, made such a startling use in his time. In his first attempt, Mr. Rider Haggard, despite of all impossibilities and all crudities, managed somehow to impress upon the imagination of his readers a fair and divine figure which to many of them was unforgettable; but in this second part of the story his right hand seems to have forgotten some of its old cunning and the work is not done with that freshness and *élan* that carried him triumphantly over all obstacles in his earlier effort. Ayesha herself becomes under the new treatment a weak and whimsical woman with few or none of the supernatural attributes that belonged to her before, and the adventures with which her tale is blazoned appear to us absolutely incredible. Not all the wishes that we could form of submitting our imagination to that of the author result in a moment of illusion; we see where the springs are, and even behold the very rope, as plainly as we did when Mr. Stephen Phillips tried to represent her in a theatre; and laughter comes too readily where the writer meant to produce awe.

The last novel we shall mention is "The Reckoning" by Mr. R. W. Chambers. This is emphatically the best work yet done by that very promising author. It continues the series which deals with the American War of Independence, and but for one fatal blot might almost be counted a masterpiece, as in writing, vigour, interest and the other attributes of a good novel it far excels any former attempt of the writer. But he has had the perversity to make his hero a spy, and though his lady-love condones the offence, or rather finds no offence therein, we cannot away with the feeling that such work is not for the heroic. A man whom George Washington did not care to associate with can scarcely be a fitting subject to become the hero of a novel, and Mr. Chambers has not been able to overcome the repugnance we feel at the idea of a man sitting at table with courteous and kindly friends, among whom is the woman with whom he falls in love, and noting down for the benefit of his military superiors all that falls from them in their private conversation. It was a paradox that could not be maintained, and we feel sorry that Mr. Chambers should have spoilt what otherwise might have been a magnificent work, by choosing a plot so repugnant to all true and manly sentiment.

The general impression left by a reading of these novels is one of amazing cleverness on the part of the writer; but it never rises to the highest talent, far less to genius. Authors of to-day do not seem able to assume the virtue of leisureliness when they have it not, and do not display the philosophical breadth that underlies the greatest imaginative works alike in verse and prose.

ABRAHAM COWLEY

Abraham Cowley, Poems. Vol. I. Edited by A. R. WALLER, M.A. (Cambridge University Press, 4s. 6d.)

IN the tone and the texture of the paper and the beauty of the clear, old-faced type, in the scientific treatment of the text—above all, in the sterling value and the comparative scarceness of the literature it reproduces—the "Cambridge English Classics" series, albeit yet in its infancy, stands already far above the ruck of popular reprints now issuing from the press. The volumes are sold at 4s. 6d. a-piece—an advance of a shilling or two on the usual price of such things; but the small increase of cost is more than compensated by the durable and handsome "get-up," and the expert and conscientious quality of the editing. The book before us—vol. i. of the English Works of Cowley—has been prepared by Mr. A. R. Waller, editor of the companion volumes, "Hudibras," "Leviathan," and Crashaw's "Poems," and himself, we suspect, the originator of this admirable series. An indefatigable and unobtrusive worker, Mr. Waller is content to spend himself upon the labour of collation and revision—a silent industry of which the *prima facie* result may, perhaps, seem to be nothing more imposing than a page or two of textual variations and corrigenda, but which, in fact, bears precious fruit in the shape of an absolutely correct and trustworthy text.

In the present volume the text followed is that of the familiar posthumous folio of 1668, edited by Cowley's literary executor, Thomas Sprat, afterward Dean of Westminster and Bishop of Rochester. Of the contents of this folio, however, a portion only will be found here, the "Essays in Verse and Prose" and the English Plays being reserved for publication in vol. ii. What is now presented consists of the "four Parts"—that is, the "Miscellanies," "The Mistress," the "Pindarique Odes," and "Davideis"—which had constituted the earlier folio of 1656, together with the "Verses Written on Several Occasions" put forth by the poet in 1663, after a pirated edition had appeared in Dublin. Mr. Waller has collated the folio of 1668 with that of 1656, with the "Verses" of 1663, and with the first edition of "The Mistress" (1647); and he prints the result of this collation in the notes (pp. 455-462). Sprat's general title-page is reproduced, as well as those severally prefixed in the posthumous folio to Parts ii., iii., and iv. of the "four Parts" above mentioned; while the title and the preface of "The Mistress" (1647), and the title and the publisher's note of the "Verses on Several Occasions," are given in the notes at the end. Thus, while he furnishes the critic with the apparatus necessary for a comparative study of Cowley's verse, the editor reprints for the ordinary reader what he regards as on the whole the soundest text of the poems. Though it does not come within the scheme of this edition as laid down in the preface, we could wish that Mr. Waller had reprinted among the notes a passage of seven lines forming the close of Cowley's "Elogie" on the death of Mrs. Katharine Philips in the folio edition of that lady's poems which appeared in 1667, the year of Cowley's death. The lines in question run as follows:—

"There all the blest do but one body grow
And are made one too with their glorious head,
Whom there triumphantly they wed
After the secret contract past below;
There Love into Identity does go:

'Tis the first Unity's Monarchique throne,
The Centre that knits all, where the Great Three's but One."

"The sweetest names, and which carry a perfume in the mention, are," says *Elia*, "Kit Marlowe, Drayton, Drummond of Hawthornden, and Cowley." Doubtless, what attracted Charles Lamb to Cowley was what Pope calls "the language of his heart"—his gentle melancholy, his garden-philosophy, his deliberate recognition, after weary years spent in the midst of civil and religious turmoil, that the truest wisdom lay, after all, in those

simple, humble ideals which had charmed the day-dreams of his boyhood. The vanity of Court and city life, the pleasures of field and woodland, the delights of solitude—of such themes he had sung as a lad in glib discipleship to Virgil, recking—how could it be otherwise?—but little of their profound significance; and to them he reverts with a deep sense—born of stern experience—of their truth, in the essays which constitute the serious work of his closing years. For the rest, despite his graceful fancy and gay sense of humour, his enormous erudition, and his command of a really original poetic style, Cowley's verse reveals but too clearly the low-pitched sentiment and the chill intellectual temper of his times.

"From the very first," writes Mr. Courthope, "it can be seen that his imagination was inspired rather by poetical form than poetical matter. . . . What sets his imagination in motion is his sense of the value and significance of the form, not the inherent life of the subject-matter; so that the interest felt in his work by the reader is excited less by the thought itself, than by the ingenious and subtle operations of the poet's mind in dealing with it."

It is this last characteristic that lends to the "Davideis" the air of a deliberate exercise in Epic verse. "Davideis" is an amazing magazine of archaeological allusion: the story is buried beneath a load of detail borrowed from the Greek and Roman poets, from the early Fathers, from Josephus, Pliny, Seneca, and a hundred others. Indeed, the notes form vastly better reading than the poem they were designed to illustrate. Fancy for a moment Milton taking the reader behind the scenes, and explaining to him that *Lad* "is not a word for verse," that "*Spouse* is not an *Heroical word*," or that "methinks *Nob* is too unheroical a name" to stand in Epic poetry! Or think of him justifying an incident borrowed from the *Æneid* as "probable enough for my turn," or defending an account of the death of Abel on the grounds that, since Holy Writ does not declare in what manner Cain slew his brother:

"I had therefore the Liberty to chuse that which I thought most probable; which is, that he knockt him on the head with some great stone, one of the first ordinary and most natural weapons of Anger. And that this stone was big enough to be the Monument or Tombstone of Abel, is not so Hyperbolical as what Virgil says in the same kind of Turnus," etc. etc.

But of all the quaint things in this truly colossal commentary, perhaps the choicest, and that which would have the most arid *Elia*, is the note on the poet's description of Hell. Hell, he sings, extends

"Beneath the dens where unfleetch Tempests lye . . .
Beneath th' eternal Fountain of all Waves;"

But—he hastens to add in a note—

"This must be taken in a Poetical sense; for else, making *Hell* to be in the Center of the Earth, it is far from infinitely large or deep; yet, on my conscience, where e're it be, it is not so strait, as that *Crowding* and sweating should be one of the *Torments* of it, as is pleasantly fancied by *Beilarmín*. *Lessius*, as if he had been there to survey it, determines the *Diameter* to be just a *Dutch mile*. But *Kibera*, upon (and out of) the *Apocalypse*, allows *Pluto* a little more elbow-room, and extends it to 1600 furlongs, that is, 200 Italian miles. *Virgil* (as good a *Divine* for this matter as either of them) says it is twice as deep as the distance twixt Heaven and Earth. . . . *Hesiod* is more moderate. . . . *Statius* puts it very low, but is not so punctual in the distance: he finds out an *Hell* beneath the vulgar one;"

—possibly identical, this last, with Coleridge's "Caledonian compartment in Hades, where there should be fire without sulphur."

Cowley deserves to be read, not only for his own sake, but for the influence which he undoubtedly exercised on subsequent poets, notably on Wordsworth. His was an essentially poetic temperament; and the faults of his verse—its occasional frigidity, its sudden lapses into prose, its excesses of hyperbole and "metaphysical" conceit—must be set down to the ungenial influences of a decadent age. To Mr. Waller our thanks are due for placing the works of this once famous but now neglected singer within the reach of every lover of our national literature.

STONE GARDENS

Stone Gardens. By Mrs. ROSE HAIG THOMAS. (Simpkin, Marshall, 7s. 6d. net.)

THE subject of stone gardens, that is to say of gardens in which stone flagging plays an important part, is so good a one, and gardens of the kind are capable of such beautiful treatment, that it is disappointing to find, in a book that purposes to treat of them, a view of their possibilities so little illuminating.

There are six pages of introductory letter-press and fourteen designs shown in plan. The copy that reaches us is an imperfect one; we arrive at the eighth design and then find another title-page and the earlier part of the book repeated; but the eight proposed garden patterns are enough to show that the conscientious critic need scarcely regret the six that are missing.

It is strange how often it occurs that things curious or grotesque, such as may for a moment tickle a shallow, idle fancy, are put in the place of those that should rather aim at being beautiful. It is a degenerate apprehension of the purposes of fine art, such as in still lower ways finds expression in such things as brooches made to look like chicken-bones, or foxes or running pheasants, and all the host of "fancy" articles that are made to look like something which they are not.

So in these stone gardens, where we expect to find designs of simple beauty such as should be the most fitting to the nature of the material and as a setting to beautiful flowers or admirable forms of plant growth, we have such patterns as No. 2, "The Lyre Design" and No. 7, "The Three Snakes Design"; the former but poorly suited for a garden pattern, and the latter simply silly and confusing, without beauty of line or directness of intention; both apparently made for the sake of dragging in the names "Lyre" and "Snakes."

In the note accompanying "The Lyre Design" we learn that "a balustrade eighteen inches high would be a convenient finish to the Lyre where it meets the water's edge." Although the drawing is large and empty this is not shown, and we ask ourselves what happens beyond; for, to make anything of the tank, "The Lyre Design" would have to be repeated four times.

We are also told that: "The Lily Tank has a rounded edge, raised to the height of one foot, convenient to sit on." A rounded stone edge only one foot from the ground level is not the most convenient seat.

The drawings themselves are confusing in that they are not shown in the simple manner accepted by all plan-drawers and intelligible to all plan-readers. An architect would stand aghast at the lumpy forms that do duty for mouldings. It is not garden design.

The whole thing is vague, unpractical and, above all, inartistic. As in the matter of design, so is it also in the proposed gardening. A practical gardener wonders what is meant by "*Sedum Cymbalaria*" (a plant unknown to botany or horticulture) and concludes that it is a shot, with uncertain aim, at *Saxifraga Cymbalaria*. Excess of punctuation gives us *Lychnis Alpina* (why a capital A to *alpina*?); want of punctuation presents us with another unknown plant, also with a redundancy of capitals, viz., *Anemone Alpina Blanda*.

The book, no doubt well-intentioned, unfortunately leaves us with a deepened conviction that those who propose to write on horticultural design, or other garden subjects, should first pause, in order the better to assure themselves that they tread on safe and firm ground, before they hold out their hands for the leading of others. A fitting preparation for such design can only be a long, careful and reverent study of the stone gardens of antiquity and of the Renaissance. In these gardens the earnest student will perceive the wonderful harmony and cohesion of the whole. He will desire to inform himself as to the manner in which this was obtained. He will measure, and draw accurately in plan and section, a

number of these gardens, striving not only to ascertain the forms of the design and its details, but to saturate himself with the spirit and impulse of the older designer. He will at the same time be following a course of architectural drawing. So, in the course of some years, if, in addition to what he has learnt by study and observation, he has also the divine gift of artistic perception and discrimination, he will be competent to apply what he knows to garden design, both broadly and in detail.

To begin by making so-called designs, without any such training or the consciousness of its needfulness, and to let them loose upon a bewildered public, is not the best way to direct the highest and truest aims of gardening. G. J.

"INTENTIONS"

Oscar Wilde: *Intentions*. Traduction française de HUGUES REBELL. (Paris: Charles Carrington.)

THE translation into French of Oscar Wilde's "Intentions," done by Hugues Rebelle on his death-bed, is accurate and adequate. The only error I have noticed, in a comparison of two or three pages taken at random, is in the rendering of "The horses of Mr. William Black's phaeton do not soar towards the sun. They merely frighten the sky at evening into violent chromolithographic effects." "Ils se contentent," the French reads, "d'épouvanter le ciel du soir, avec de violents effets de chromos." Almost every English name is correctly spelt: a rare distinction in books printed in France. "Hazzlitt" and "Collin" are the only exceptions I have observed.

The prose of Oscar Wilde loses little in translation into French: a certain flash and snap, but hardly more. Delicacies of the emotions and the imagination are what lose most in translation, and of these Wilde had none. His work had resonance, but no music; colour, but no atmosphere; vivid intelligence, but no meditation. Much of its form came to it from France, and returns into French willingly. "Intentions" is full of ideas, and the ideas remain: not profound ideas, but often startling enough to be instructive. M. Charles Grolleau, in his preface, says admirably:

"*Intentions* est bien loin de ne contenir que des paradoxes. Ceux qui s'y trouvent, en tout cas, sont très divers par essence. Les uns, purs divertissements verbaux, sont à négliger après l'attention d'une seconde que leur accorde notre surprise. Les autres sont d'une plus noble famille et créent l'étonnement durable et fécond du paradoxe né viable s'il est une vérité neuve."

Wilde wrote to astonish, but he wrote out of a ceaselessly active brain, itself genuinely amused by its efforts to amuse. This book of "Intentions" has the stimulus of irresponsible talk. Its pretence at a strict logic is part of the joke, and deceives only those who are meant to be deceived.

To the English reader, the most valuable part of this volume is the interpretation of Wilde hinted at in the fragments of that essay which Hugues Rebelle did not live long enough to write. The author of "La Nichina" began his short and too hurried career with the promise of something really vital. Not since Casanova has there been so intimate a revival or reconstruction of Casanova's Venice. The book was crude and brutal, but it lived. After that came novel after novel, too precipitately, and with too little care for anything but the grosser side of things. But the man had a personal attitude, in spite of these concessions, and his opinions, on literature as on other matters, had the value of an absolute independence. Though, at the time of the trial, he had written in the "Mercure de France" a fervid "Défense d'Oscar Wilde," he had no illusion as to the actual value of much of Wilde's work. Thus we find him noting, with perfect fairness:

"Wilde n'a rien d'achevé. Son œuvre est très intéressante, parce qu'elle est caractéristique d'un temps; elle a une valeur documentaire, mais elle n'a pas de valeur vraiment littéraire. Dans la *Duchesse de Padoue* il imite Hugo et Sardou, dans le *Portrait de Dorian Gray*, Huysmans. *Intentions* est le bréviaire du symbolisme. Les idées que s'y trouvent sont dans Mallarmé, dans Villiers de l'Isle-Adam. Ses poèmes en vers sont inspirés de Swinburne. Les *Poèmes en prose* sont

ce qu'il y a de plus original dans son œuvre; ils représentent assez la causerie du poète, mais comme ils lui sont inférieurs!"

All this is true, though it does not say everything, forgetting his finest work, the modern plays, in which alone he becomes a master; and forgetting also many other influences, Pater throughout, and Maeterlinck and the "Tentation de Saint Antoine" in "Salome." But the comparison with Mallarmé is significant:

"Mallarmé a une œuvre très mince, il est vrai, mais qui tout de même existe. Certains vers sont d'une beauté admirable. . . . Wilde, par malheur, était esthète avant d'être poète. Il produisait des œuvres comme des gâteaux."

There, it seems to me, the essential thing is said.

Wilde wrote much that was true, new, and valuable about art and the artist. But, in everything that he wrote, he wrote from the outside. He said nothing which had not been said before him, or which was not the mere wilful contrary of what had been said before him. In his devotion to beauty he seemed to have given up the whole world, and yet what was most tragic in the tragedy was that he had never recognised the true face of beauty. He followed beauty, and beauty fled from him, for his devotion was that of the lover proud of many conquests. He was eager to proclaim the conquest, and too hasty to distinguish between beauty and beauty's handmaid. His praise of beauty is always a boast, never an homage. When he attempted to create beauty in words he described beautiful things. "Salome" is a catalogue.

In the comedies, where the talker is at last free to do nothing but talk, we find a genuine thing, a thing of marvellous ingenuity, a thing of unsurpassed cleverness. They add a new, wild grace to the English stage. But, even here, we find only astonishment, not beauty. *The Importance of being Earnest* is an enchanting game, which one is glad that some one has played to amuse grown-up people. It is better than the best topsyturvydom of Mr. Gilbert; it will survive, with the "Bab Ballads" and the "Ingoldsby Legends."

ARTHUR SYMONS.

THE AVON GORGE

A MEETING of the Committee for the Preservation of the Avon Banks was held at Clifton last week, at the invitation of Mrs. Barnett, wife of Canon Barnett, of Toynbee Hall, the Right Hon. Lewis Fry presiding. The fact that the preservation of this lovely river-gorge does not concern the inhabitants of Bristol and Clifton only was emphasised by the presence of Sir Robert Bunter, Chairman of the Committee for Preserving Places of Beauty or Historic Interest. The matter is one that also concerns literature. Though no great ballad or poem has immortalised the Avon, as Yarrow, and Doon, and Duddon have been immortalised, yet its banks have been rendered sacred by the footprints of many poets and authors; and, if in a lesser degree, they are still a national literary asset, such as the Lakes are. Bristolians, and the nation at large, have stolidly allowed them to be denuded and destroyed for the sake of a very inferior kind of road-metal.

The Committee was formed in 1903; it ought to have been formed a century earlier. In 1802, a foreign visitor, Don Manuel Espriella, wrote that "the beauty of this scene is greatly diminishing, the rocks are used as quarries. The people of Bristol seem to sell everything that can be sold. They sold their cross, by what species of weight or measurement I wot not; they sold their eagle by the pound, and here they are selling the sublime and beautiful by the boatload." On comparing old pictures of the river with the present scene, the damage done becomes only too obvious; but it is really strange, remembering how long the spoliation has continued, that the injury has not been greater. There is still much loveliness remaining, and the scars are such as nature will deal with tenderly, if she is now left to do her beneficent work. Bristolians should remember that they are selling something more valuable, even in a pecuniary sense, than the tons of stone

being so cruelly quarried. Beauty has an increasing power of attracting visitors, and throughout the kingdom there is scarcely a lovelier spot than this ought to be, and may still be.

Bristol has been a town of importance since the time of the Saxons, while the camps at Clifton and on the opposite banks prove a far earlier occupation. But it was not till the middle of the seventeenth century that the Hotwell waters began to attract visitors to Clifton, and made it for a period a rival of Bath. Pepys and Defoe came here; Pope and Addison visited the Pump-room; the poet Savage, whom we should have forgotten were it not for Dr. Johnson, lies buried in a Bristol church. In some sense these are all literary associations of the river, for we may feel sure that the visitors were all taken by their entertainers to explore the beauties of Clifton and Durdham Downs; it was not the fault of the Avon if the Pump-room proved the more attractive. Turning over the forgotten pages of poets such as Penrose and Scott of Amwell, we find timid references to the beauties of Clifton and St. Vincent's Rocks; William Whitehead, indeed, has a "Hymn to the Nymph of Bristol Spring," in which he gives us the false classicisms of *Avonia*, *Bristoduna*, *Vincentia*, and *Leya*; yet he speaks truly when he says:

"Clifton stands
Courtied by every breeze; and every sun
There sheds a kinder ray."

But it is not of these smaller fry that the Avon reminds us. Chatterton is a truer glory, though it is easier to deplore his fate and eulogise his genius than to read his writings. Stripped of their spurious antiquity, they have lines of great beauty and power; but the youthful poet owed more to the church of St. Mary Redcliffe than to the loveliness of the river banks. It was this church that steeped his spirit in romanticism; but the romantic development which he had helped to further had not then reached a definite and articulate understanding of natural scenery. For the expression of this in its fulness literature was waiting for the "Tintern Abbey" of Wordsworth, which was first put on paper in the back room of Cottle's shop at the corner of Bristol's High Street. In a house at only a few yards' distance Southey was born. We long for records of the rambles that Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey must have taken along the winding riverside, but few of such records exist; we have to be content with remembering the intensity of their admiration for scenes that fully deserved it.

The plentiful literary associations of Bristol can only in a partial sense be attached to this exquisite gorge. Mason buried his wife in Bristol Cathedral: Bishop Butler lies here; Macaulay and Kingsley were here in their boyhood: the lion-hearted Landor resided for a time at Clifton. The neighbourhood has known eminent visitors or residents too numerous to mention: De Quincey, Henry Hallam, J. A. Symonds, Harriet Martineau, Sidney Smith, Dickens, Frederick Tennyson. Mr. Pickwick came to Clifton, and the hero of "Humphry Clinker" had been before him. Shelley came here, and the artists Danby, Müller, Turner and Lawrence. Not one failed in love for the views of river and wooded cliffs and spreading downs; yet with it all the Bristol Avon remains almost voiceless in literature. We know that the paths along its banks, the glades and coppices and gentle slopes, have been hallowed by footsteps of the immortals: we know that both Southey and Landor thought the situation of Clifton hardly to be matched in Europe; yet the river itself seems somehow to have been neglected. Can it be that poets and prose-writers have alike resented the extent of oozing mud that it presents at low water? Did they never see the stream in its moments of transfiguration? For the sake of such moments, by no means rare, and for the sake of the district's imperishable connection with men like Wordsworth, Coleridge and Landor—for the sake also of those who are yet unborn—every lover of nature and of literature will pray that the local efforts to undo a great wrong and to preserve a wonderful loveliness may be successful.

UP THAMES

In the time of wild roses
As up Thames we travelled,
Where mid water-weeds ravelled
The lily uncloses,

To his old shores the river
A new song was singing,
And young shoots were springing
On old roots for ever.

Dog-daisies were dancing,
And flags flamed in cluster,
On the dark stream a lustre
Now blurred and now glancing.

A tall reed down-weighing,
The sedge-warbler fluttered;
One sweet note he uttered,
Then left it soft-swaying.

By the bank's sandy hollow
My dipt oars went beating,
And past our bows fleeing
Blue-backed shone the swallow.

High woods, heron-haunted,
Rose, changed, as we rounded
Old hills greenly mounded,
To meadows enchanted,

A dream ever moulded
Afresh for our wonder,
Still opening asunder
For the stream many-folded;

Till sunset was rimming
The West with pale flushes;
Behind the black rushes
The last light was dimming;

And the lonely stream, hiding
Shy birds, grew more lonely,
And with us was only
The noise of our gliding.

In cloud of gray weather
The evening o'erdarkened.
In the stillness we hearkened;
Our hearts sang together.

LAURENCE BINYON.

JOSÉ-MARIA DE HEREDIA

THE death of José-Maria de Heredia on the eve of his sixty-third birthday is a loss not only to French letters, but to the most delightful and exclusive section of French intellectual society. Only in Paris, only in the city which prides itself on being the modern Athens, could such a career as that of this poet have been possible, for, amazing as it now seems, it is a fact that he won fame long years before he published any of his work in volume form, and his reputation rests on the contents of one book.

De Heredia was born in Cuba, of a Spanish father and a French mother. He came to France as a child, and was educated at a famous old school, the College of St. Vincent de Paul at Senlis. Then he went back to his native island, and was for a year a student at the Havana University. To this twelve months he was fond of referring with pleasure, though he became entirely French in sympathy and in heart. His parents, even then realising his exceptional gifts and aspirations, wisely allowed him to return to Paris in order to enter the École des Chartes, from

which is drawn the great army of studious and cultivated men whose delightful duty it is to deal with the national archives and those libraries and museums belonging to the State.

Doubtless L'École des Chartes was the young Spaniard's first introduction to the circle of poets and writers who hailed Leconte de Lisle as their literary godfather. This large-hearted and generous man delighted in gathering round him both the known and the unknown writers of the day, and it was at his house that José-Maria de Heredia met the men who, banded together under the name of Parnassiens, hailed in him a fellow craftsman of rare distinction and power. His first verses were published in the old *Revue de Paris* when he was only twenty, and at once attracted enthusiastic attention. France was then rich in poets, and it is remarkable that the boy—for he was nothing more—was able to admire without imitating such poets as Gautier, Baudelaire, Banville, Coppée, and last, not least, his kind friend and patron, Leconte de Lisle.

It is easy to imagine how attractive to such men as we know those who surrounded him must have been, was the rather austere and delicate personality suddenly projected into their midst. They were employed in extracting from the French language all it could give, and some among them were inclined to despise the old and severe rules which had hitherto always governed French composition. De Heredia at once triumphantly proved that the utmost perfection of form could be wedded to the most original turns of expression and profundities of thought. He chose the sonnet as his medium, and each of his contributions to the literary papers and reviews of the 'sixties, the 'seventies, and the 'eighties was hailed as a masterpiece and handed from one to the other in manuscript. Small wonder perhaps that as time went on he grew afraid of presenting his work in collected form to a larger world of readers than that inner circle of thinkers, poets, and critics, among whom he held so unique a position.

At last, however, rather more than ten years ago, his friends persuaded him to face the ordeal, and his collected verse was published by Lemerre, in a volume entitled "*Les Trophées*." It was composed of a hundred and eighteen sonnets, a poem in three episodes founded on the *Cid*, and a fragmentary epic entitled, "*Les Conquérants de L'Or*."

"*Les Trophées*" was received with a burst of enthusiasm, even by that most severe and most discerning of critics, Jules Lemaitre, who wrote:

"Ces sonnets, qui, comme tous les sonnets, n'ont que quatorze vers, mais qui contiennent autant de choses que s'ils en avaient soixante, sont des combinaisons savantes, subtiles, compliquées, avec des artifices et des dessous qu'on ne soupçonne pas tout d'abord."

On that book of sonnets his fame rests; but not a few have been entertained by his delightful work on "*La Nonne Alferez*."

He found admirers and appreciators not only in France, but also in Germany and in Italy, but he remained the writers' writer and the poets' poet, and he neither won nor cared to win the suffrages of those to whom the verse of writers as different as say, Béranger and Richpin appeal. Gifted with a considerable sense of humour, M. de Heredia was fond latterly of observing that to many people he was principally known as being the father-in-law of three distinguished men of letters, Henri de Regnier, Pierre Louys, and Maurice Maïndron.

His reception at the French Academy, which took place in the May of 1895, when he succeeded Charles de Mazade, gave rise to a remarkable demonstration of the respect and admiration he inspired. François Coppée, in a singularly felicitous and charming discourse, recalled his early friendship with the new Immortal, and the gatherings which took place under the hospitable roof of their common friend, Leconte de Lisle. He also incidentally administered a snub to those young writers who believe that they can produce masterpieces without reference to the usual rules

of composition, and bade them take de Heredia for their model.

During the last years of his life M. de Heredia published very little. A great admirer of the unfortunate revolutionary poet, André Chenier, he lived long enough to complete a careful critical edition of that writer's works and four years ago he was appointed chief librarian of that most delightful and peaceful of Parisian literary haunts, the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal. One of his daughters, Madame Henri de Regnier, has inherited his poetic gift, and has already published some very fine verse.

A LITERARY CAUSERIE

THE POEMS OF BACCHYLIDES

THE nineteenth century will always be remembered as the century of abundant classical treasure-trove. In 1816 Niebuhr found in the library of the chapter at Verona a copy of the Epistles of St. Jerome, under which he deciphered the text of the Institutes of Gaius, one of the most characteristic bequests which ancient Rome has made to modern society, for Jurisprudence is her chief gift to us, while we have derived our Art from the Greeks and our Religion from the Hebrews. This discovery was followed by that of a large portion of Cicero's "*De Republica*" in a Vatican palimpsest by Cardinal Mai, the orations of Hyperides, which have turned a mere name into a person of high historical interest, and Alcman's hymn to the Dioscuri which adds a new *genre* to Hellenic poetry, with its strange dialect and its strong companion pictures of Agido and Hagesichora. All these finds were prior to 1856, and the two last were buried in Egyptian papyri. It is only in the last decade of the nineteenth century that Egypt has revealed to us her most precious treasures, among which stand pre-eminent for historical and literary interest the treatise on the Constitution of Athens commonly ascribed to Aristotle, the Mimes of Herodas and the poems of Bacchylides.

The odes of Bacchylides survived in some form till about 500 A.D., "but since that date," writes Dr. Kenyon, the brilliant editor of the *editio princeps* in 1897, "we have no certain warrant that any eye has seen a complete poem of Bacchylides for a space of fourteen hundred years." These poems, exhumed from a sepulture of about a millennium and a half, teem with every kind of literary interest. We have now above a thousand verses, while the few fragments already published in Bergk's "*Poetae Lyrici Graeci*" afford us about a hundred.

It is interesting to observe how the real tone and spirit of a poet may be misrepresented if he has come down to us only in fragments. "The genius and art of Bacchylides," writes K. O. Müller in his history of Greek literature, "were chiefly devoted to the pleasures of private life, love and wine, and when compared with those of Simonides appear marked by greater sensual grace and less moral elevation." The muse of Bacchylides is anything but sensual. The judgment of Müller is due to the fact that one of the fragments of Bacchylides, almost the longest of them, depicts one whom wine has made "o'er all the ills of life victorious":

Straightway, as he drinks he is a triumphant conqueror, soon to be king of all the world; his halls gleam with ivory, his argosies are laden down with Egyptian bales; so soars his spirit as he quaffs the beaker.

[The translations are taken from those in an article on Bacchylides by R. Y. Tyrrell in the *Quarterly Review*, No. 374, April 1898.]

It will give us an insight into the style of Bacchylides if we compare a fragment of Pindar (218 Bergk) on the same theme:

The cares that oppress us leave the breast, and o'er a sea of golden store we sail, all alike to a Shore of Illusion. The poor man is rich, and the rich are gladder at heart, javelled through by the arrows of the vine.

In these two fragments we have the ease and grace so characteristic of the Cean nightingale, and "the ever surging yet bridled excitement, recasting and heightening what a man has to say," which is always glowing in the Theban eagle. The words just quoted are Matthew Arnold's description of what he means by the spirit of style. In the Pindaric fragment we have in the "shore of illusion" and "shot through with the arrows of wine" the note of distinction which that critic tells us to look for in every poem before we pronounce it truly great. Such notes of distinction we shall often find in Bacchylides, but not in the form of wild excitement of spirit under which two or more images struggle together for expression and result in a majestic exuberance such as we find in Pindar, Sophocles and above all in Æschylus. Æschylus ("Suppliants" 97) speaks of "the paths of thought shagged with dark umbrage," and we have this darkness reflected (if darkness can be reflected) in the words of Cassandra ("Agam." 1180):

Lo, the oracle will no more peer from behind a veil, like a bride new-wedded: nay, it is like to come and clear the welkin with a blast that will roll up against the bright horizon, even as a surging billow, a horror far worse than this.

Bacchylides has nothing like this. He seems to have aspired to the art of his uncle Simonides rather than that of his great rival Pindar. He resembles what we possess of Simonides, but we find in him nothing approaching the exquisite beauty and tenderness of the elder poet's ode on Danaë and the infant Perseus. The judgment of the ancient world on Bacchylides is completely borne out by the odes as we now have them. They ascribe to him sweetness, ease, grace, and a uniform excellence of craftsmanship without much invention.

We have already observed how a survival only in the form of fragments may falsify judgments about the character of a poet's genius. Another curious result is to be noted. We find in the recently discovered odes words which would undoubtedly be quoted as the source of several modern passages in poetry, were it not certain that the modern poet could not possibly have seen the ancient. In the ode which tells so beautifully the tale of Meleager (v. 63-175) the ghosts of the dead come to Heracles "thick as leaves which the wind scatters o'er the gleaming headlands of sheep-dotted Ida." When Milton writes: "Thick as leaves in Vallombrosa," he comes so much nearer to Bacchylides than other poets who have used the same or a similar comparison, that one would have said he took it straight from the Cean, but that we know that the Greek poet was buried, in the time of Milton, under the night of more than ten centuries. But there is a passage in the thirteenth ode on which Professor Platt has justly observed: "You would have sworn Milton was copying Bacchylides":

As on the dark-burgeoning main the North wind from Thrace rendeth a bark by the violence of the waves, coming on it in the night-watches when men take their rest, but with bright dawn the wind leaves to blow, and a fair breeze lays the main to rest, and with sail swelling neath the gentle South right fain they win to the haven that was beyond their hopes. So when the Trojans heard that the doughty Achilles was abiding in his tent for the sake of the yellow-haired Briseis with limbs of young desire, then did they raise up to heaven their hands, when they descried a bright gleam of light neath the storm-cloud.

Compare Milton's "Paradise Lost," ii. 286:

As when hollow rocks retain
The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long
Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Seafaring men o'erwatch'd, whose bark by chance,
Or pinnacle, anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest.

In Ode xvii., telling the story of Theseus and the captives (seven youths and seven maidens, among them Eriboea) in a kind of lyrical idyll, of which we have in ancient literature no example save in one other (the eighteenth) ode of the same poet, we find the lust of the tyrant Minos thus described: they are sailing over the Cretan sea:

Now stings that come baleful from the love-crowned goddess smote the heart of Minos, and he withheld not his hand from the maiden Eriboea, but touched wantonly her cheek.

Shakespeare—another good impressionist—(*Hamlet*, iii. 4) has the same touch:

Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out.

We would gladly give the rest of this poem, which is told with consummate grace. Theseus upbraids Minos, who challenges him to prove his descent from Poseidon by leaping into the sea and bringing up a ring which he throws into the water, while he himself calls upon Zeus to declare his fatherhood by a flash of lightning. Zeus sends "ringlets of flame" for a token. The sequel is thus told:

So spake he, and the heart of the other quailed not, but standing up he plunged from the firm deck, and the yielding ocean-plain received him. Now Minos was glad at heart and bade them let the good ship go with the breeze: howbeit fate ordained an issue far from his thoughts. So the swift bark sped on her way, and vehement was the North that blew upon her astern. Trembled the bevy of captives for fear when the hero leapt into the sea, and from their lily-soft eyes they let the tear down fall, as they thought of the heavy teen that must be. Now the dolphins, denizens of the deep, swiftly bore great Theseus to the abode of his sire the God that made the steed, yea, he came to the dwelling of the Gods. And he was afraid when he descried the daughters debonair of Nereus boon; for from their lovely limbs a light shined as of burning fire, and in their tresses were twined ribands of braided gold, and with nimble feet they disported them in the dance. Yea, he saw his sire's dear spouse, the blessed Amphitrite, in the delectable halls. She flung round him a floating robe of purple, and placed on his thick locks a chaplet very perfect, darkling with red roses, which arch Aphrodite gave her at her marriage. No deed of the Gods, whatsoever they list, is past belief to them that have understanding. By the ship's taper stern he appeared. Ah, what were the thoughts of the Cnosian lord that he brake upon as he came from the sea unwet, a very miracle. On his limbs gleamed the divine gifts, the throned maidens shouted together in new found joy. The sea roared, and the bevy of youth hard by sang the blithe song of triumph with dulcet voice:

O God of Delos, be thy heart gladdened by the chorus of Ceians, and vouchsafe unto us thy blessing from on high.

In conclusion we would lay before our readers the Meleager episode in the fifth ode to which we have already referred. When Heracles went to Hades in quest of Cerberus:

There he marked the shades of poor mortals beside Cocytus' stream, thick as leaves which the wind scatters o'er the gleaming headlands of sheep-dotted Ida; and among them towered the ghost of dauntless Meleager, of Porthaon's line. When Alcmena's wondrous son descried him gleaming in his harness, he hooked on the bow-tip the twanging string, and oped his quiver's lid, and took therefrom a brazen-tipped shaft. But the shade of Meleager up-spake to him face to face, for he knew him well: "Son of great Zeus, be still, and calming thy spirit launch not thy fierce bolt at the sprites of the dead and gone. It hath no terrors for them." So spake he, and the son of Amphitryon was astonished and said: "What god or mortal reared up so fair a sapling, and in what clime? Who took thy life? Ah, such an one as thou art will girdle Hera send for my undoing. But nay, of a surety Pallas maketh my life her care." Then Meleager weeping, said: "Hard it is to turn aside the mind of the Gods; else would my sire the good knight Oeneus with prayer and sacrifice of many goats and russet kine have laid the wrath of Artemis divine, white-armed, flower-crowned. But the goddess nursed her wrath not to be prevailed over, and set upon fair Calydon a merciless brute, a mighty boar, that in the plenitude of his strength hewed into the fruit-trees with his tusk, and slaughtered the sheep and whatsoever mortal wight withstood him. We lords of the Greeks fought a hard fight amain six days continually; and when God gave the battle to the Aetolians we buried those whom the hoarse-grunting brute had slain in his rushings, even Ancaeus and Agelaus, best of my brave brothers, whom Althaea bore in Oeneus' storied halls. Most of these death took, for not yet did the angry huntress-queen stay her wrath; and for the tawny hide with the staunch Cypetes we fought amain. Then slew I, among others many, Iphiclus and Aphareus, my mother's stout brothers; for cruel Ares distinguisheth not a friend in time of fighting; sightless fly the arrows at the foemen's lives, and deal death to whom God listeth. Now my hapless mother, the wily daughter of Thestius, when she was 'ware of this, devised my destruction—a dame undaunted. The log that bare in it my untimely death she took from the figured chest wherein she had shut it and burned it in the fire. Fate had woven in her web at my birth that by it should be meted the measure of my life. I was spoiling Clymenus, brave son of Deipylus

for I had come on him, a goodly wight, before the ramparts, and the foemen were flying to the strong town of Pleuron, ancient hold. And my sweet life was minished in me, and I knew I was fainting away. Ah! as I drew my last breath I fell a-weeping in my anguish, for that I was leaving my glorious prime." Men say that then and never afore or after did the son of Amphitryon, dauntless in the fray, let the tear down fall in ruth for the hapless wight, and thus in answer he spake: "For men it is best never to have been born, nor ever to have looked upon the light of the sun. But ah! it boots not to weep for these things; rather is it meet to speak of that which the future hath in store. Hast thou in the halls of doughty Oeneus a virgin sister like unto thee in favour? Her would I fain make my buxom bride." To him spake the ghost of staunch Meleager: "I left behind me in the halls Deianeira of the dark-pale neck, and not yet hath she felt the spell of the golden goddess of love."

Thus abruptly ends the ballad of Hercules and Meleager, perhaps the most characteristic of the odes.

In the closing words of the third ode the poet prophesies that he will share the glory with which the name of Hiero will go down to posterity. After twenty-five centuries he has achieved a glory beside which the fame of the Sicilian monarch is pale indeed. If we may prophesy ourselves, we will dare to say that his place beside Pindar in our schools and colleges will be assured when we have the eagerly expected edition of Sir Richard Jebb, who has already taken so large a share in the restoring and explaining of the odes of Bacchylides.

R. Y. TYRRELL.

[Since the above was written the edition of Sir R. Jebb has appeared, and more than justifies the forecast of the writer.]

[Next week's *Causerie* will be on "Something Ajar: Irish Poetry in the 'Forties," by Jane Barlow.]

FICTION

Sacred and Profane Love. By ARNOLD BENNETT. (Chatto & Windus, 6s.)

MR. BENNETT appears before the public in a dual capacity, as a writer of lucrative trash, and as an artist. We have no concern with Mr. Bennett's artistic conscience. He knows what he is about better than most men. In all he does, that quality of assurance is manifest, and he does nothing that is not good of its kind. His melodramas—fantasias, he is clever enough to call them—could not fail to satisfy the abandoned craving for sensation: his criticism should be better known than it is—his essay on George Moore in "Fame and Fiction" expresses one point of view with singular precision and some beauty: his "A Great Man" has wit. But his best, up till now, is undoubtedly to be found in "Anna of the Five Towns" in "Leonora," and in his latest book, which is now before us. We feel that these are his work. The others are simply turned off for amusement in leisure moments, safety-valves for his superfluous steam. In "Sacred and Profane Love" Mr. Bennett has set himself a great task: he narrates the three experiences of passion that have come into the life of a strong and beautiful woman—a character which any imaginative writer might well be proud to have created. Her name is Carlotta: and she tells her own story. The personal method of narration is in this case a necessity, and is not the least of the many difficulties that have beset Mr. Bennett's path and over which he has triumphed by the power of his technique. The chief difficulty, however, is to make the theme noble: the least wavering or uncertainty of grip in the author, and the theme of passion infallibly and swiftly becomes ignoble and sordid. Here, again, Mr. Bennett has succeeded: he has created feeling that is intense enough and sincere enough to need no apology: but here also, in our opinion lies the weak point of the book. He has not sufficiently trusted to his power to ennoble the theme on its own merits. He has made use of artifice which was not necessary for him. He has no need to make the lover, Diaz, a world-famed pianist: by

so doing he weakens the essential by introducing an element of improbability into the opening phase of the book: and again, at the end, the emotional intensity is lowered and not heightened to climax by the superficial pomp of Diaz's triumph in the Paris opera-house. A weaker writer would have had need for all the glitter and tinsel which he could command. Mr. Bennett has not. Tinsel merely serves to obscure the large humanity of his treatment, conspicuous when Carlotta steals down into the hall of the hotel in the early morning and buys the boat-shaped straw hat from the servant girl, and comes in contact with the people starting for their work on her journey home; conspicuous, too, throughout the second part and especially in the scene—splendidly dramatic—between Carlotta and Mrs. Ispanlove, a weak, whimpering woman, who rouses all the pity in the strong heart of Carlotta: conspicuous in the character of the very old man, Lord Alcar. These are touches of genius.

He Loved but One. By F. FRANKFORT MOORE. (Nash, 6s.)

WE have always felt a strong dislike of the pseudo-historical *genre* of novel, in which the writer weaves a little tale of his own imagining round the figure of some personage, illustrious in letters or history. Mr. Moore has increased our dislike to positive hatred; all the worst qualities of this pernicious breed of book are accentuated in his present novel, which purports to tell the story of Lord Byron and Mary Chaworth. The title is taken from a line in "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," which serves as the motto of Mr. Moore's theory: "he . . . had sighed to many though he loved but one." The facts are not of importance compared with the way in which they are handled. Mr. Moore's object, apparently, is to water Byron down to the public taste. Byron, that "puissant and splendid personality"—the man who posed magnificently before the world, who fed on the world's applause and was then content to treat it with mockery, is not one to profit by a thin coat of moral whitewash, inexpertly laid on by a prolific novelist. The book, moreover, is what Byron never was, long-winded and dull. Nothing could be more dramatic than the scene which Mr. Moore takes for his hero's entry: Byron's meeting with Miss Chaworth the morning after his experience on that portentous night, when the great powers put on their instruments, and comets flashed and fell; but even that is spun out to so wearisome a length that all the poignancy of effect is lost. It is there, however, that we catch a glimpse of something which might be Byron. In the remainder of the book we merely see a weakly, insipid fellow, a sentimental philanderer, sighing to many, proposing marriage to another, presumably loving a fourth, through hundreds of pages of stilted talk and portentous effort at wit, docketed to such names as Sheridan Moore, Madame de Staël, and Coleridge.

Divers Vanities. By ARTHUR MORRISON. (Methuen, 6s.)

THERE is a delicate finish about these collected stories which will not surprise any one acquainted with Mr. Morrison's work. He writes of mobsmen, of splits, of thieves, of witches, of Spotto Bird, Billy Wilks, and Snorky Timms—ruffians all, and all amusing. There is not a dull scoundrel in any story, nor a dull story in the book. Some are humorous; others are grimly weird. Of the gay, none is gayer than the "Disorder of the Bath," at which we laughed as heartily as Snorky Timms when he saw—But we must tell this vision in his own perfect words: "I see it was a sort of tin enamel thing the bloke was under, an' then—s'elp me—s'elp me never! blimy if it wasn't the toff out of the carryvan, stark naked as a little coopid—'idin' under a bloomin' 'ip bath. . . . 'I've fell through the bottom of my van,' sez 'e; 'I've fell through the bottom of the dam thing in my bath, an' my man's as deaf as a post,' sez 'e. . . . Well I never 'ad such a paralysed chronic fit in all my puff! I'd a give a tanner for a lamp-post to ketch 'old of, an' 'ang on to, s'elp me." But Mr. Timms, though no narker, did not fail, for all his

laughter, to improve the shining hour, and we did not fail to keep an eye, half closed with laughter, on the deft manipulation of the story in the hands of Mr. Morrison. He does it pat, as any Dane could. "A Dead 'un" is the grimmest of the grim. Billy Wilks nerves himself to enter a shut-up house in search of silver plunder. He has reached the drawing-room, and is hastily going through the contents of an escritoire, when he looks up. There is a man standing in the doorway, watching. In blind terror he rushes at the man—it is the gardener—and batters him to death with a "james." It is a dreadful tale, with a horribly realistic end. How far these stories may be taken as authentic studies of thieves we do not know, nor do we know any one who has done them better. They are the work of a man who is master of his craft.

The Marquise's Millions. By FRANCES AYMAR MATHEWS. (Funk & Wagnalls, 4s.)

THIS is a romantic little tale of devotion to the Bourbon cause, light, readable and effective rather than well written. The style is in harmony with the often repeated description of the American heroine's attire, which displayed too few buttons and too many pins. The Marquise de Brimont and her sister live in a forgotten corner of France, a hundred miles from a newspaper—only one had been known to reach the village in forty years—and amid surroundings and sentiments unchanged since 1848. These royalist ladies watched daily for the coming of Louis XIX., and dedicated their accumulated millions to his service. An American grandniece, Pauline, and her lover the Duc de Monplaisir, a son of Napoleon III., determine to obtain the fortune, and hit upon a plan by which the Duc impersonates the returned Bourbon king. It is rather a mean and heartless trick for Pauline to play upon her ancient relatives, who have sacrificed their happiness in life to a strong sense of loyalty, but it does not come as a surprise. The reader is prepared to find that Pauline's indifference to the necessary button is the outward sign of moral slovenliness. The author portrays melodramatic types of character tolerably well; and although she disregards the wise advice, always to join your flats, she distracts the eye from gaps and cracks by a dazzling display of paint and gilding. She is less successful when dealing with nature. Here is an example of her florid style at its best: "The great winds from the snow-clad mountains whipped and spurred and churned the sea into whirlpools of dismay and black depths of sucking, prey-seeking horror, when the thunder split the water into mountains of death, when the lightning laughed and jeered among the awful clouds."

Tongues of Gossip. By A. CURTIS SHERWOOD. (Unwin, 6s.)

THE gossip in this story is not of an entertaining kind; it is the tittle-tattle of religious people over the shortcomings of their neighbours. The book is written with a serious purpose, and sets forth at great length the arguments between church-goers and chapel-goers in Carron, upon ritual and observance, conduct and the proprieties. It must be owned that charity comes off very badly in the conflict. Mr. Baring, the vicar, is happily a rare example of the Anglican priesthood, a man who would be intolerable in any position of authority. Censorious, narrow-minded, a mischief-maker, he is not above encouraging his parishioners to spy upon their acquaintance, and he is ever ready to lend an ear to evil reports and scandalous suggestions. A better man would have enforced the author's point of view with more effect; as it is, after a few instances of Mr. Baring's arrogance and vulgarity, we do not care what he thinks upon any subject. With the Nonconformist disputants Miss Sherwood is more at home; if they are not particularly interesting, they are at least straightforward and kindly human beings. There is no romance, not a glimmer of a love-story, and no interest outside the war of religious opinion, and talk of individual backslidings. As a story "Tongues of Gossip" is entirely without attraction.

The Fate of Luke Ormerod. By RICHARD DOWLING. (Hurst & Blackett, 6s.)

OF all the villains made familiar to us by fiction and melodrama there is none better calculated to excite our loathing than the blackmailer, especially when his victim is a feeble fond old man, as is James Allerton in Mr. Dowling's latest novel. And of heroes the sailor is more certain than any other to win the ready sympathy of English readers. It is bold of Mr. Dowling to endow Luke Ormerod with even one virtue to redeem his otherwise despicable character, but we can easily forgive this charitable departure from the strict rule, which declares that the villain in this kind of literature shall not do or say a gentlemanly thing, until he is safely laid upon his death-bed. It is also perhaps more true to life than orthodox (for it surely cannot be unintentional), that the hero should behave with such amazing stupidity when the critical moment comes. Not only was his action in itself criminal, but, if he had allowed the law to take its normal course, he would have saved a deal of pain and anxiety to the very people whose feelings he most desired to spare. But, seeing that he had fallen in love at first sight, had rescued from drowning the object of his affections, had practically proposed to her, and had been promoted to be captain of his ship, all within three days, he may be excused for not being able to think very clearly. We will not do Mr. Dowling the ill service of giving any more hints as to the plot of his story, which is far more important than its delineation of character. For our own part, we frankly admit that we can derive much genuine enjoyment from sensational novels of this kind; if it is a weakness, we have at least the consolation of knowing that we err in excellent and learned company. And without hesitation we place "The Fate of Luke Ormerod" high among its kind.

MUSIC

LISZT: THE ROMANCE AND FRIENDSHIPS OF HIS LIFE—I

To stand on the Pincio, looking towards the Janiculum, and watch great golden Rome sink swiftly from April sunset into the purple Italian dusk, is to realise one of Keats' loveliest lines; the impression produced by the ever-dwindling city being one of a flower closing at the dewfall—"as though a rose should shut and be a bud again." But of the flushed yellow rose thus folding itself up into twilight, two shadowy lines or protuberances will sometimes arrest the gaze of a watcher on the Pincio. They are the towers of Monte Mario, the old Dominican monastery, within whose walls the most brilliant man of a brilliant age became the "Abbé Liszt."

Perhaps no very strong religious motive spurred the great genius to this act. Perhaps he had already realised that the chains we forge for ourselves prove in the long run the most galling of all. At any rate he never became a full priest of a church in which he ardently believed; his determination to put a spiritual barrier between himself and certain unacknowledged pretensions received a sufficient stamp of finality from Minor Orders, and these alone were sealed upon him. In the shadow of Monte Mario he spent seven sheltered years, happy in this quasi-retreat from a world where, to quote his own words, "one should never allow oneself to be carried away by the stream."

"The soul of an artist," he said, "ought to be like a lonely rock, surrounded by, and often buried beneath the waves, but in spite of that immovable. Only thus can he preserve his originality, and save from the intemperances of life the ideal he seeks to preserve."

It is not too bold a paradox to say of this extraordinary man, that in the intemperances of his life, it was the ideal alone he sought. We are told that no work of art can live unless its claim to immortality is based on suggestions of the infinite. Only so can it open, so to speak, a window on Eternity. For this reason many painters contrive a

little gate or path somewhere in their landscapes, so as to lead the mind past the limits of the actual picture towards unrepresented spaces beyond. Liszt through all his realistic experiences was conscious of the skyward-giving gate—the little path leading through the tangible to the ideal. If a Lancelot in act, he was a Galahad in aspiration; material things existed for him principally as the embodiment of the spiritual which were his quest. To this natural nobility we may attribute his ascendancy over other minds—"an ascendancy almost amounting to sorcery," says one biographer. "Let us never put any one on a parallel with Liszt, either as pianist, musician, and least of all as man," said Rubinstein once, "for Liszt is more than all that—Liszt is an idea."

Rubinstein was right. Of Liszt's three powers as composer, player, and man, his personality was the most magnetic; the result being that all his paths of life became—as he once complained of some music given him in childhood—"too easy." Fatally easy in fact. It has been said that certain types of face came into prominence with certain epochs and disappeared like their fashions. But this hypothesis more truly applies to types of mind. The salient feature of the early nineteenth century was an acute sensibility. Society in general wept copious tears over the "Sorrows of Werther" and then paraded its moist pocket handkerchief in public. Literature flamed with descriptions of *grandes passions* by George Sand and her school, or condescended to languishing romances of the "Lady Flabella" kind, so much admired by Mrs. Witttitterly. We all remember Kate Nickleby's dutiful reading of that immortal page beginning: "*Cherizette, ma chère, donnez-moi de l'eau de cologne, s'ils-vous-plait, mon enfant!*" and ending with the appearance of a youthful page in peach-coloured plush and silk stockings, who, dropping gracefully on one knee, presents a scented missive on a golden salver to the Lady Flabella. A *billet-doux* of course. "O delicious!" cries Mrs. Witttitterly, "So soft!" "Yes, I think it is," answers poor Kate, "very soft!" And we agree with her. But the spirit of the day was more yielding still, more extravagantly sentimental, more addicted to "elegant display." The *élégantes* drove their white ponies with violet-velvet reins and jewelled whips, under the eyes of numberless adorers; every one of these enrapturing creatures when not a princess was a countess. Princesses and countesses alike aspired to the rôle of Egeria to some great mind—by preference one outside their matrimonial ties. Romanticism, in a word, held undisputed sway, and at such a moment who could be so romantically beloved, who so daring, so brilliant, so irresistible as Liszt?

Till the Princess Caroline of Sayn-Wittgenstein became his fixed star, or, more truly, before and after her stardom assumed that fixity which drove the restless genius to Monte Mario, quite a galaxy of countesses sparkle round Liszt's name. First and foremost, Madame d'Agoult, afterwards known in literature as "Daniel Stern," and the mother of Cosima Liszt, who married Von Bülow, and eventually Richard Wagner. Then there is a quaint anecdote about a Russian countess—a pupil whom Liszt once invited to play at a large charity concert. Leaning upon his arm, she appeared, therefore, among the other artists "in a gown of violet-velvet, buttoned up to the chin"—the envied of all present. Alas! she broke down and rose ignominiously to fly, but was quelled by the master's stern voice ordering her to "remain and finish." Finish she did, accordingly, in a storm of wrong notes; then went home and took laudanum, passing for dead during forty-eight hours. On her waking came an angry letter ordering her to leave Buda-Pesth. However, armed with a revolver, she forced her way into Liszt's rooms, and deliberately took aim at him. "Fire!" said Liszt, calmly advancing towards her. But she did not, poor wretch; falling on her knees instead, she besought forgiveness—a useless proceeding, for when the master's mind was made up he was inexorable, and she had to leave Buda-Pesth. We read that she was not ill-looking, but "painfully thin" and freakish. Liszt was tired of her.

Pleasanter, if less exciting, experiences were afforded by the Polish countess who used regularly to receive her genius in a boudoir strewn with rose-leaves, "symbolising thus," says Yanka Wohl, "an affection full of humility and without a thorn." Liszt did not like thorns, and if there chanced to be an earwig or two among the rose-leaves, be sure he was too courteous to notice them. Even the Comte d'Agoult, whom he had wronged, admitted that he was "a perfect gentleman." "To be loved by Liszt," said another infatuated noble dame, "if only for one day is joy enough for a whole life!"

We are not half-way through the bevy, but enough has been said to show the truth of Yanka Wohl's assertion that "Liszt was not intended for domestic life. His family hearth was the world, and he found his home in the altars which were raised to him wherever he went. . . ."

Obviously a comet in the stove makes unsatisfactory fuel for *pot-au-feu*. Chopin is said to have loved Liszt's interpretation of his music better than his own; and in return Liszt played nothing with so much grace and charm as his friend's valses—valsés which some one said ought to be danced to by *countesses alone*. Here, indeed, Liszt's personal experiences exceeded Chopin's. What shadows must have floated through his mind as he caressed the keys—what reminiscences of violet velvet and rose-leaves, of exquisite, languishing, adoring creatures perfumed by attentive Chérizettes!

"O that I might never . . . hear the voice of busy common sense!" cries Keats; and as we finger the pages of Liszt's life, this sentiment finds an echo in our hearts. But common sense will make itself heard somehow, and Liszt himself lived long enough to see Romanticism fade away.

E #

CORRESPONDENCE

THE NEW LIFE OF DICKENS

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—The reputation of Charles Dickens is so securely established that it will be able, no doubt, to bear up against even so monumental a mistake as Mr. Percy Fitzgerald's recently published "*Life*," with all its oleaginous eulogy—its remorseless rhapsodies. In so far, therefore, as the hero of the book is concerned one may let it pass on to the tender mercies of Time. But there are other questions raised by the volumes. And among them are these: What are the limits which literary decency should set to the publication of private documents? And: What is the minimum of capacity and care which should be demanded in a critic who indulges in wholesale attack?

A letter written by John Dickens, the father of the novelist, is published in facsimile by Mr. Fitzgerald (vol. ii. p. 113). It is not a nice letter; it is the sort of letter of which thousands are penned every day by people hard pressed for money. A letter which most people would have left to rot on the dust-heap from which Mr. Fitzgerald has seen fit to rescue it. Why call up this ineffectual, impecunious, ghost—a ghost from which (if there be anything at all in heredity) Dickens derived some, at least, of his abounding sense of humour? The biographer will, doubtless, allege that he is merely producing documentary evidence in support of the contention that Dickens *was* the "study" from which Micawber was drawn. But that question was settled long ago in Forster's "*Life of Charles Dickens*"—the whole business being treated there with discrimination and reserve. Mr. Fitzgerald should surely have remembered, when considering the expediency of publishing this deplorable document, that John Dickens was the grandfather of certain distinguished persons now living.

Hablot K. Browne is the object of some very scathing aspersions on the part of the biographer. They appear in vol. ii. and at pp. 241, 252, and 253:

"Dickens . . . had to content himself with H. K. Browne, or 'Phiz' as he was called. . . . 'Pickwick' was a perfect triumph in the art. . . . 'Nickleby,' by the same hand, was bold and spirited, but there was a falling off. . . . In 'Chuzzlewit' this tendency had become caricature. . . . With 'Bleak House' Phiz tried a new style. He wished to be taken seriously. . . . For the figures all attempts at drawing were abandoned. . . . This system was pursued in the succeeding stories with a regular crescendo of inferiority. . . . At last Dickens was compelled to cast off his coadjutor and look for other aid."

The statements of fact in these extracts are as grotesque as the criticisms are gratuitous. The original drawing of Pickwick was made by Seymour—as every student of Dickens knows, with the exception, as it would appear, of the Founder of the Dickens Fellowship. The omission in Mr. Fitzgerald's list of Browne's exquisite drawings for

"David Copperfield" will strike most readers as being disingenuous. And what, may we inquire, were "the succeeding stories" that displayed "a regular crescendo of inferiority"? "Little Dorrit" was the only book following "Bleak House" that was illustrated by Phiz. Dickens himself it was who "tried a new style" and desired a new style of illustration. To speak of Browne, whose name will for ever be associated with the best and most characteristic work of Dickens, as a "cast-off coadjutor" is impertinent and absurd.

But one must not, perhaps, take Mr. Percy Fitzgerald too seriously. For in criticising his own work he displays the same gay irresponsibility that characterises his comments on the productions of others. Thus in calling our attention to a novel of his own writing entitled "Never Forgotten," he says: "The book is sold and read to this hour—and a perfume has been named after it." Quaint—very—as our friend Jingle might have said.

October 2.

WILLIAM MACKAY.

CLAUDE AND COROT

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—As nobody seems to think it worth while to take any notice of the remarks of the "Man in the Street," I hope you will pardon me taking up a little of your space with a few remarks concerning his letter dated September 9. As he seems to lay down the law, it makes one feel as if you must say something. But not being a literary man, it is hard sometimes to express oneself. But the artist thinks and feels all the same and it is the artist, the men who paint, who see and feel the charm of Corot. Perhaps it is because he was one of the few landscape painters who have ever lived who knew exactly what to leave and when to leave off excepting perhaps Cecil Lawson, David Cox (in his last period) and some others of the Barbizon School.

Comparisons are often odious and are generally drawn by amateurs. But I once saw two pictures in an exhibition, entitled *Timber Hauling in the New Forest*, or something to this effect. One was a work which will live, a great painting by the late Ch. Furse, the other, merely an academic well-drawn picture by Miss Kemp-Welch; it might be easier to draw comparisons between these two than between Claude and Corot. Perhaps, it will always be that the "men in the street" will prefer the grand compositions of Claude and Turner to a Constable, Corot, and others of the Barbizon School.

October 2.

"NON-ACADEMIC."

YORKSHIRE FOLK-SONGS

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—The verses which Mr. Oliver Onions was unable to verify may be found in Ward's "English Poets," vol. i. p. 232. The first stanza should run thus:

"This ae nighte, this ae nighte,
Every night and alle,
Fire and sleet, and candle lighte,
And Christe receive thy saule."

But surely the "Lyke-Water Dirge" is of Scottish origin?

B. M. G.

THE NAVY UNDER NELSON

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—I have been not a little interested by the passage of arms between your reviewer and Mr. Masefield. As a collector of naval prints, and one who is especially interested in naval uniform, it has been a matter of speculation with me how Mr. Masefield would reply to the charge of having made a mistake in the lieutenant's uniform of the Nelson period. Of course during that era, which covered nearly half a century, there was as much change in the uniform and costume of the fleet as there has been since the Crimean War. But your reviewer is quite right in saying that lieutenants wore their hats fore and aft. It was the captains and superior officers who wore the head-covering athwartships. Mr. Masefield appears to have been misled by this. And in "The Naval Miscellany," which is a fairly trustworthy guide, he will find portraits of naval lieutenants in the year 1800 wearing the hat with the points before and behind.

October 4.

NAVAL RESEARCH.

"BONNIE DOON"

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—In your notice of Mr. Hutton's "Book of English Love Poems," his version of "Bonnie Doon" is described as "not that usually included among the poems of Burns." I presume this must be the one beginning: "Ye flowerie banks o' bonnie Doon, How can ye bloom sae fair." This was the version sent by the poet to John Ballantyne of Ayr, altered from a still earlier one sent in 1791 to A. Cunningham at Edinburgh, and adapted to an old melody known as "Campdelinore" or "Ballindalloch's Reel." The first line runs: "Sweet are the banks, the banks of Doon." Afterwards, in 1792, Burns wrote the popular version: "Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon," in which every second line had to be lengthened from six syllables to eight, in order to suit the tune with which we are all familiar. This tune was called "The Caledonian Hunt's Delight," of unknown origin, but supposed by some to be an Irish air. So that altogether there were three versions of this well-known song, but the second is superior to either of the others, and might well be chosen as

a specimen of the poet's powers, whenever quoted apart from the music.

October 3.

C. S. JERRAM.

[Our objection was that no explanation such as is offered by our Correspondent was given by the anthologist.—Ed.]

"ABOUT IT AND ABOUT IT"

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—This phrase, which your correspondent, Mr. J. C. L. Clark, traces to one of Charles Lamb's "Lepus" papers, has certainly an earlier origin, for Pope uses it with much force in the *Dunciad* (Book IV.), where Dulness is addressed as follows:

"For thee we dim the eyes, and stuff the head

With all such reading as was never read:

For thee explain a thing till all men doubt it,

And write about it, goddess, and about it."

Judging from the context, it seems probable that Lamb had this passage in mind. Either author may have suggested the phrase to FitzGerald, or, very probably, neither.

October 2.

H. C. MINCHIN.

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—When Lamb wrote "to talk about it and about it," he was quoting Coleridge. See *The Friend*, ii. 7, where the phrase occurs in a translation of a passage from the *Clouds* of Aristophanes:

"Great goddesses are they (the Sophists) to lazy folks,

Who pour down on us gifts of fluent speech,

Sense most sententious, wonderful fine effect,

And how to talk about it and about it,

Thoughts brisk as bees, and pathos soft and thawy."

If FitzGerald borrowed the expression, it was probably from the same source.

CHARLES LEE.

"THE PORTENT"

To the Editor of THE ACADEMY

SIR,—A *propos* of E. A. B.'s appreciation of the late George Macdonald's "ghost-story" "The Portent," in the current ACADEMY, I would like to say that to my personal knowledge—I brought a brand-new copy this morning—the book is not out of print. It forms vol. vii. of Dr. Macdonald's "Works of Fancy and Imagination," of which volumes may be purchased separately, published by Messrs. Chatto and Windus.

October 2.

J. C. L. CLARK.

[Messrs. Chatto and Windus also write pointing out that there is still a steady demand for the book.—Ed.]

BOOKS RECEIVED

ART.

- Gilpin, Sidney. *Sam Bough, R.S.A.* Some account of his life and works. Bell, 7s. 6d. net.
Wood, T. Martin. *The Drawings of G. D. Rossetti.* Modern Master Daughtsmen series. Newnes, 7s. 6d. net.
Baldry, A. L. *The Drawings of J. M. Swan.* Modern Master Draughtsmen series. Newnes, 7s. 6d. net.
Alexandre, Arsène. *Puvis de Chavannes.* Art Library. Newnes, 3s. 6d. net.

BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS.

- Gray, Charles. H. *Lodowick Carliell.* His life, and a discussion of his plays. Chicago: University Press, \$1.50.
Romilly, S. H. *Letters to "Icy" from the First Earl of Dudley.* Longmans, 16s.
Taylor, I. A. *The Life of Queen Henrietta Maria.* In two vols. Hutchinson, 24s. net.
Hubback, J. H., and E. *Jane Austen's Sailor Brothers.* Lane, 12s. 6d. net.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS.

- The Red Book of Romance.* Edited by Andrew Lang. Longmans, 6s.
Seton, Ernest Thompson. *Woodmyth and Fable.* Hodder & Stoughton 5s. net.
The Stories of Willy Wind and Jock and the Cheeses. By the Duchess of Buckingham and Chandos. Illustrated by John S. Eland. Black, 3s. 6d.
Robertson, W. Graham. *A Year of Songs for a Baby in a Garden.* Illustrated. Lane, 3s. 6d.
Little Olaf and the Bears; Little Red Riding Hood. Nisbet, 1s. net. each.
The Holy Land. An album of ten scenes (reproduced in colour from paintings) connected with the life of Jesus. Owen, 1s. 6d. net.

CLASSICS.

- Bacchylides: The Poems and Fragments.* Edited, with introduction, notes, and prose translation, by Sir Richard C. Jebb. Cambridge: University Press, 15s. net.

DRAMA.

- Cleather, Alice Leighton; and Crump, Basil. *Tristan and Isolde.* An interpretation embodying Wagner's own explanations. Methuen, 2s. 6d.

EDUCATION.

- Contributions to the History of Education: III.—*Pioneers of Modern Education, 1600-1700.* By John William Adamson. Cambridge: University Press, 4s. 6d. net.

- Ma première visite à Paris*. Par A. E. C. An illustrated French reading book for beginners. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1s. 6d.
 Thomson, C. Linklater. *A First History of England*. Part vi.—1689-1820. Horace Marshall, 2s. 6d.
 De Fivas, V. *New Grammar of French Grammars*. Fifty-seventh edition, revised throughout and enlarged. Crosby Lockwood, 2s. 6d.
 Balzac's *Les Chouans*. Edited by C. L. Freeman. Modern French Series. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 3s.
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